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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
Thirty-sixth session
3-28 June 1996 (Part I)

DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Volodymyr Y. YELCHENKO (Ukraine)

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives

1. At its 4th meeting, on 4 June 1996, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on strengthening the role of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives (A/51/88, annex).

Discussion

2. Delegations observed that the report showed both progress made in improving evaluation and weaknesses that needed to be addressed and that this mixed picture applied to all aspects of programme oversight at the departmental level. Delegations considered that the linkage between evaluation findings and programme planning and budgeting remained a problem that needed to be addressed by both the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Department of Administration and Management. Delegations welcomed the commitment made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services to issue guidelines for oversight at the departmental level.

3. Some delegations welcomed the initiative by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean regarding the mechanism to systematically obtain

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independent evaluations of its publications, which many of its members have acknowledged as being very useful. Mention was also made of the important decisions taken at the twenty-sixth session of the Commission, in April 1996, to, inter alia, improve its indicators for evaluating Commission activities in terms of performance, productivity and impact; to establish an ad hoc working group to define priorities within the approved programme of the Commission; and to elaborate strategical directions for the future activities of the Commission.

4. Delegations expressed their concern over the very low rate of implementation of a number of programmes, in particular priority subprogrammes, as noted in paragraph 17 of the report. They also regretted that there was not enough information with regard to the reasons for postponing several activities or programmes.

Conclusions and recommendations

5. The Committee commended the report, which it found to be comprehensive and objective.

6. The Committee noted that the compressed cycle of the in-depth evaluation had increased evaluation coverage without sacrificing quality.

7. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that the crime prevention and criminal justice and international drug control programmes be the subject of in-depth evaluations, and that reports thereon should be presented to the Committee at its thirty-eighth session, in 1998. These two topics have not been subject to in-depth evaluation.

8. The Committee encouraged the Office of Internal Oversight Services to develop guidelines on internal oversight within each unit at the departmental level, covering the following issues:

(a) Institutional arrangements for oversight, which in general should be centralized in one unit reporting to the head of the department;

(b) Minimum common standards, including, for all important publications, a requirement that the author department actively seek reviews in technical and specialized journals and, where appropriate, in the general press throughout the world;

(c) Training and other services to be provided by the Office of Internal Oversight Services.